

Endura *Pakagilet.*



Price: £34.99

From: Endura, endura.co.uk

Tested: Three months.

Gilets are one of those things that you either 'get' or you don't. If you're in the former camp then it's likely you already have a favourite; in which case you can probably skip the next couple of paragraphs and move on to the bit at the end. If, however, you're a member of the latter group then let us try to persuade you...

No waterproof fabric will ever breathe as well as three nice big holes for your arms and neck, and an even bigger hole for your waist; despite what the manufacturer of the fabric claims. This is particularly true in warm (-ish), wet (-tish), British summer riding conditions. High temperatures and humidity on both sides of a breathable fabric make its job very difficult.

You might be thinking, 'But I'll get wet if I don't wear a proper jacket!'. Yes, you will. Just like you get wet under the shower on a (hopefully) daily basis and, as far as I can tell from here, you haven't shrunk yet. Skin is a very effective waterproof layer on its own. The primary purpose of a summer shell layer is to cut down on windchill, which will cool you more rapidly than evaporation on its own - it's not really there to keep you dry.

So, we have established that gilets are good. What's so good about this one from Endura? In short: everything. It's available in male and female cuts and in plenty of colours; it packs smaller than a can of post-ride Fanta if you roll it carefully; it has a neatly baffled zip, a slit pocket at the rear so racey types can access jersey pockets, and a trim cut that doesn't flap or constrict. Oh, and it's dead cheap too.

Overall: One of the most useful bits of kit you'll buy. Keep one to hand at all times.

Jenn